

Historic Preservation and Open Space: Mutual Reinforcement of the Dual Characteristics

---- A Case Study of Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park in Beijing,
China

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By
Shengye Guo

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park in Beijing, China. Under the backdrop of large-scale demolition of historic structures and the growing popularity of open space, the relics park, as a combination of both a historic site and a park, has been given more attention from governmental officials, planners, and even residents. Government and planners are facing the problem of balancing the relationship between historic preservation and urban open space, and residents are also involved because this is closely related to people's residential environment and quality of life.

Through my interviews and site visit, I find the relics park has significant positive externalities to the surroundings. In addition, there is a mutual reinforcement of the dual characteristics in the relics park. Its features as a historic site lead it to be built into a park, and its functions as a park strengthen its historic value.

The Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park is not the only case of transformation from historic site into an open space. The implications of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park are profound; the renovation of a relics park through the combination of historic preservation and open space has been acknowledged gradually and could be generalized further more. The Ming Dynasty City Wall Ruins Park realized the transformation from a pure historic site to an open space in the same way and got a good result. And I think to combine the characteristics of historic preservation and open space would be a good way to protect historic sites and provide residents with amenities at the same time.

Thesis Advisor: Yuan Xiao
Thesis Reader: Xiaohong Pan

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I. Introduction

The successful case of Central Park in New York, which has significantly influenced the surrounding living conditions, has drawn people's attention on the externalities¹ of open space. Since it has provided a large open space, green space, running and biking space, skating and boating space, and other various public facilities, it is called the world's greatest "real estate engine". The world's most expensive apartments are around Central Park, and the biggest real estate growth happens around here. Central Park is undoubtedly benefitting the surrounding residents and even the whole city in both recreational and in economic sense.

The High Line Park, which used to be an elevated track, also has positive impacts on nearby neighborhood according to many public reviews. Visitors recommend escaping to the High Line Park when you need a break from the busy city life and enjoy the beautiful landscaping. Besides, according to New York City Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), before the construction of the High Line Park in 2003, the surrounding residential properties were valued 8% below overall median rent in Manhattan but had appreciated beyond borough-wide values by 2011.

Both of the two open space cases produced a value-added impact to the surroundings and brought benefits to nearby residents. Besides, the High Line Park is also an industrious relics site that has been renovated to be a park. Given the current condition that more and more open spaces are paved over to make room for new urban construction in order to accommodate the increasing population, how should we understand the open space? Is it universally applicable that open

¹ Externalities: An externality is the cost or benefit that affects a party who did not choose to incur that cost or benefit. There are positive externalities and negative externalities.

spaces would increase real estate values and bring benefits to surroundings? What about in different contexts, for example is it applicable in China?

There have been many studies on the externalities of public facilities and open space on the surrounding housing prices. According to the results of the current research, the parks are likely to increase housing prices of the surrounding area, further promoting the city's economic development.

However, few of these works have addressed the micro-impacts on the surrounding residents' quality of life, for example, how does the open space change their travel mode, leisure activities, shopping behaviors and other daily activities. Especially, few of the current research have studied the externalities of a relics park on the surrounding living conditions. A relics park, which is a particular type of open space, means a historic site and is also a public park. Besides, none of these studies has explored how does a relics park influence a community, whether because of its historic value, or because of its functions as a park.

The abandoned rail track was protected and renovated not only because of its structural styles but also because of its historic value. In China, there are much more historic structures that need to be protected. However, many historic buildings in China have been demolished at present due to different reasons, for example, Chinese's famous architect Liang Sicheng²'s former residence.

² Liang Sicheng (Chinese: 梁思成): (1901.4-1972.1) Chinese architecture. Liang is the author of China's first modern history on Chinese architecture, and founder of the Architecture Department of Northeastern University in 1928 and Tsinghua University in 1946. He is recognized as the "Father of Modern Chinese Architecture". His wife was Chinese architect and poet Lin Huiyin.

This aroused heated discussion about the conflict between historic preservation and urban construction.

In Chinese history, there seemed to be a tradition that, a new ruler would destroy representative constructions of the previous dynasty and build up new ones so as to manifest a brand new era. For example, the Emperor Qin Shihuang³ commenced a mega construction boom including the famous Great Wall and the E-Pang Palace. In the period between the Qin and Han dynasties, Xiang Yu⁴, the king of Chu, burnt down the Xianyang Palace⁵, which was also a typical building of the Qin Dynasty. This behavior represented his determination of conquering the old dynasty and establishing a new one. Another example, when the Qing troops took over the Shanhai Pass⁶, they tore down the ancestral temples of the Ming Dynasty and burnt down the statue of Zhu Yuanzhang⁷.

This tradition even lasted until after the establishment of new China. The president at that time advocated breaking the “four-olds” during the Cultural Revolution. Many historic sites were destroyed and were replaced by new ones. He once stood on the Tiananmen and said that, in the future, he wanted to see chimneys everywhere from Tiananmen. This also reconfirms Chinese rulers’ tradition of large-scale bulldozing and reconstruction, which they think are the symbols of political unity and the foundation of regime stability.

³ Qin Shihuang, in Chinese, 秦始皇.

⁴ Xiang Yu, in Chinese, 项羽.

⁵ Xianyang Palace, in Chinese, 咸阳宫.

⁶ Shanhai Pass, in Chinese, 山海关.

⁷ Zhu Yuanzhang, in Chinese, 朱元璋.

This convention largely explains many of the demolitions from historic and political perspectives. The current situation is no better. In front of new urban constructions, which could drive up GDP growth thus contributing to political performances, historic sites appear powerless to fight back the fate of being demolished. Under this long-lasting condition of large-scale reconstruction and the current trend, both of which are definitely against historic preservation, these remaining relics are even more precious.

Since preservation and the building of open space have few monetary benefits, they are always placed in a powerless position without understanding clearly the importance of historic preservation and the importance of open space. Historic sites have special cultural values and could not be rebuilt if once demolished because the demolition is an irreversible process. Besides, they also have a positive influence on the residential living conditions and even on a larger scale. So in the following parts, I am going to elaborate more on the positive influences and how do these positive influences reflect.

Based on the current literature and media news, we could largely see the importance of the historic preservation and the positive externalities of open space on the surrounding quality of life. By using the case study of Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park in Beijing⁸, this study will fill in the gap of historic relics parks' impacts on residents' living environment and how does a relics park reflect its positive externalities.

China is an ancient country with long history. The city of Beijing, capital of China, has a rich history and is famous for its history and culture. The history of more than 3000 years has left the

⁸ The Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park, in Chinese, 元大都城垣遗址公园.

city with many marvelous heritages, which would show the great achievement of ancient Chinese people. Except for the worldwide-known Great Wall, Forbidden City and Temple of Heaven, there are also large amount of heritages scattered around the city around people. The Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park is among them.

The Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park is the largest linear park in Beijing, China. It is built on the city wall relics of the Yuan Dynasty and extends across Haidian district and Chaoyang district from west to east, covering a length of 5.6 miles (9 kilometers⁹). Beijing municipal government formally approved the renovation of the park in 1988 and named it Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park.

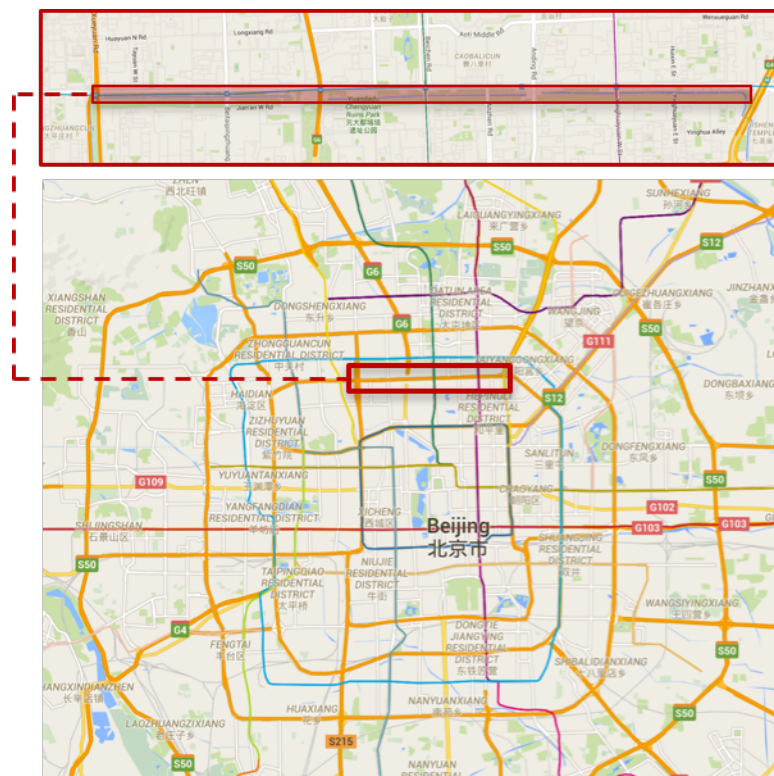


Figure 1 Location of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park

⁹ 1 Kilometer = 0.62 Miles

To protect this relics park and also to meet the needs of Olympic landscape construction, Chaoyang District Government started to renovate this park in 2003. After the renovation, the park now is the largest belt park, the largest wetland, and also the largest outdoor group sculptures spread across the park in Beijing. In 2006, Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park was awarded as a Major Historical and Cultural Site Protected at the National Level ¹⁰.

I choose this relics park as my case subject because it is not only a public facility but also a historic preservation project, which has gone through a renovation in the early 21st century. There are also some similar historic relics parks in China, for example the Ming Dynasty City Wall Ruins Park in Beijing, Huang Chenggen Ruins Park in Beijing. The renovation of these relics parks reflects the public focus on both historic preservation and open space building. In recent years, historic preservation has been paid more attention to by planners, governmental officials, and even residents than before, since the planning focus in China has shifted from increment planning to inventory planning, which means renovating and improving the historic sites are becoming the new focuses instead of building brand new constructions. Increment planning represents building new constructions and inventory planning represents improving the existing structures, especially historic ones. However, many historic sites still could not escape the fate of being demolished and making land for new constructions. In face of the confrontation between the cultural historic preservation and urban construction, I think preservation has a greater meaning in both commercial and cultural aspects.

¹⁰ Major Historical and Cultural Site Protected at the National Level, MHCSPL, Chinese: *Quan Guo Zhong Dian Wen Wu Bao Hu Dan Wei* 全国重点文物保护单位.

Public resources and facilities could play an important role in determining people's quality of life, especially in terms of open spaces, such as public parks, which could provide residents with healthy recreational places, and places of social interactions. Many researchers have studied the impacts of public facilities, and the implications of historic preservation on residential housing prices. Building on the existing research, this paper examines the influences of historic open space on the residential living conditions, especially the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park. Further more, I also look into how does such a historic open space reflect its influences, whether through its historic value or through its functions as an open space.

I spent one week in Beijing, observing the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park and conducting semi-structured interviewees to nearby residents. Through my site observation and the 10 effective responses from the interviewees, the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park, which represents historic open spaces, has significant positive externalities to the nearby residents. Besides, this relics park has been well managed and maintained.

The major functions of relics are historic and cultural values. The primary functions of open spaces are environmental, recreational, interactive, and economic values. A relics park combines the functions of both historic sites and open spaces, providing a beautiful interactive platform for residents' communication and social activities, and conserving the historic meanings of the heritage at the same time. In addition, the two characteristics as historic site and open space reinforce each other. Because of its identity as a historic site, it could get more sponsor from the government and become more attractive to residents. As an open space, it attracts both residents and tourists, and advocates the historic and cultural meanings of the relics.

This approach through combination of historic preservation and open space is a transformation from pure non-material value into monetary value, and could be applied to similar situations.

II. Literature Review

The recent articles related to this topic can be divided into three categories; in other words, I mainly use three aspects of existing research results to support the theoretical background of my research. The first is the influences of historic preservation on the surrounding residential housing prices and the economy development. The second is impacts or externalities of public facilities, especially open spaces, on residential housing prices. The third is the influences of public facilities, particularly open spaces, on the residential living qualities.

The **first** category is on the impacts of historic preservation on the residential housing prices. Historic designation has played an important role in efforts to preserve central city neighborhoods and to promote urban economy (Listokin et al., 1998). In a survey of economic development tools of more than 300 cities, historic preservation was cited as the seventh (of 45) most often used revitalization strategy (Douthat, 1994). Since then, many studies have been concentrated on the impacts of historic designation on the surrounding residential housing prices.

One of Listokin (1998)'s articles explored the contributions of historic preservation to housing prices and economic development. In the article, the authors compared the economic benefits derived from four methods, historic preservation in housing rehabilitation, housing production, heritage tourism, and downtown revitalization. The conclusion indicated that historic preservation is the most powerful tool among the four for fostering housing and economic development (Listokin et al., 2010). Romero (2004) came to the same conclusion that the housing values and community economy improve due to the historic properties preservation and the positive externalities include promoting land prices, increasing tourism and reducing crime.

Accordingly, historic preservation should be paid more attention to, not only because of its cultural value, but also its contributions to economy.

However, there are also studies with a different conclusion that historic designation, especially in the case of apartments and condominiums, would lead to a decline of sales price of properties due to façade maintenance costs and limitations on the owners' ability to make changes to the property's exterior (Asabere et al., 1994).

Historic preservation would promote urban economic development through different ways. These measurements include household income, employment ratio, property values, heritage tourism, environmental measurements, and downtown revitalization (Rypkema et al., 2011), among which property values has been studied quite thoroughly and taken a large proportion of the economic development.

In Listokin's research, the conclusions also indicate the historic preservation does have disadvantages, such as leading to the gentrification trend (Listokin et al., 2010). However, its advantages outweigh the disadvantages, and policies could help ameliorate the negative side effects.

The **second** category is about the impacts or externalities of Public facilities, especially open spaces, on the residential housing prices. It is generally acknowledged that public facilities would possibly influence the surrounding living conditions. Public resources such as transportation, hospitals, parks, and schools are important factors in promoting housing prices.

Earlier research has mainly concentrated on the transportation and other infrastructural factors, and then this focus has gradually shifted to the impacts of green space on housing prices (Wu et al. 2014).

Open space and public recreational lands enhance the economy and quality of life in cities by improving air quality, providing recreational opportunities, and enhancing aesthetic values, among many other benefits (Nowak and McPherson, 1993). Metropolitan Design Center (2004) once pointed out that, the size of open spaces would have impacts not only on the recreational values, but also on the quantity and quality of ecosystem services provided to the nearby communities.

The successful case of the Central Park is an example. With the title of “the world’s greatest real estate engine”, Central Park is the biggest and the most powerful draw in New York’s property market. Central Park neighborhood has the highest rent in the world and has promoted surrounding property values greatly during the last two decades. This popularity results from people’s needs for open space, green space and relevant recreational facilities, which have been provided by the park. Therefore, Central Park is a good example of open space’s driven power on property values.

There are many research projects examining the relationship between the demand for public facilities and the housing prices through Hedonic Pricing Method (HPM), which is a typical method testing the determinants of housing prices. Hedonic Pricing Method is a quantitative approach to quantify the externalities that contribute to housing prices. The assumption of HPM

is, the price of a commodity is determined by the combination of its many attributes (Brasington and Hite, 2008).

Quantitative estimates of the economic values of open space have emerged since 1997, spaces by Tyrvainen and Miettinen. Tyrvainen and Miettinen revealed that property price increases with its proximity to the nearby open space (Tyrvainen and Miettinen, 2000). In a literature review of open spaces and urban parks, McConnell and Walls (2005) pointed out that most of the quantitative studies measure the amenity values through focusing on either the distance to urban parks or the proportion of open space in certain neighborhood, instead of the acreage effect of open space on nearby property values. Then in a hedonic analysis of the demand for and benefits of urban recreation parks, Poudyal, Hodgesa, and Merrett employed a typical hedonic model, and confirmed that the urban recreational park acres do increase nearby property values in 2008.

In the previous research, in addition to the structural and housing variables, the proximity to the nearest open space, the size of the open space, the quality of park facilities, the greening in the open space, the distance to CBD, the distance to arterial road, the distances to other public facilities and services, the neighborhood characteristics (including the demographic features of the open space users) and many other factors would influence the property value. Among these factors, another research indicated that, compared to any other characteristics, the size of natural areas and open spaces have the largest effect on housing prices (Lutzenhiser and Netusil, 2001).

It is the same story in Chinese context. In an HPM study of Shenzhen in China, the researchers concluded the proximity to parks has a powerful effect on surrounding property value. Parks can

promote an increase in housing prices within the scope of 412.14 square km (Wu et al, 2014). Besides, this effect diminishes and becomes constant as the distance increases. In Shenzhen case, the standard residential price decreases 20,920 CNY (US\$3,356) as the distance increases by 1 km (Wu et al, 2014). It is similar in Guangzhou case, both green space view and the proximity to water bodies have notably enhanced residential housing price (Jim and Chen, 2005).

With the rapid growth of the population, the demand for open spaces increases correspondingly. In addition to the population growth, citizens' awareness of ecological issues and their needs for recreational services also draw the demand up. However, many open spaces are paved over, making room for new urban constructions, in order to accommodate the increasing population, which makes open spaces more valuable in urban life.

The **third** category of literature is about the influences of Public facilities (esp. parks) on the residential living qualities. According to some health service research, the percentage of green space in people's living environment has a positive association with the perceived general health of residents (Maas et al., 2005). Health benefits provided by open space include physical health benefits and psychological health benefits.

In addition to health benefits, open space, for example, parks could also provide social benefits, economic benefits, and environmental benefits. Parks can facilitate social interactions by providing a meeting space, which is critical in maintaining community cohesion and social capital (Moore et al., 1992). Recreational facilities provide direct and indirect economic benefits as we have mentioned before. Parks also play a role in preserving and purifying the environment

(Crompton, 1999), reducing air pollution and noise pollution. Most of the studies are concentrated on the health perspective through a theoretical research method. Since few focus on the influences of open space on people's daily living conditions based on their reflection through interviews and surveys, my research will mainly focus on this part.

To sum up, the existing research primarily focus on the influences of historic preservation on the surrounding residential housing prices and economy development, the externalities of open space on surrounding housing prices, and the influences of open spaces on the residents' quality of life.

III. Research Design

1. Motivation

In the year of 2014, a heated debate was raised when Chinese famous architect Liang Sicheng's former residence was demolished. This is not the only historic site that has been bulldozed under the backdrop of large-scale new constructions. Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, many historic buildings disappeared and have gone through the same destiny as Liang's former residence. For example, Qingshou Temple Twin Towers¹¹, Dianmen¹², were both destroyed in 1955. Hangzhou Gulou¹³ in Zhejiang Province, disappeared in 1960s. Then a fake Gulou was built and replaced the original one. An Qing Mosque¹⁴ in Anhui province, was rebuilt in 1896, then vanished in the 1970s.

However, there are also some historic sites that have been protected or renovated through appropriate ways. For example, the Ming Dynasty City Wall Ruins Park and Shanghai Xintiandi. The Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park is also an impressive project that has been successfully renovated during the last century.

What are the differences between the successful cases and the demolished ones? Why some of them have been saved and protected, but some others have been damaged? According to the literature review, open spaces would largely promote the quality of life of a community. Then how about historic open space, just like the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park? What are the externalities of it? And what are the special features of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park

¹¹ Qingshou Temple Twin Towers, in Chinese, 庆寿寺双塔.

¹² Dianmen, in Chinese, 地安门.

¹³ Hangzhou Gulou, in Chinese, 杭州鼓楼.

¹⁴ An Qing Mosque, in Chinese 安庆清真寺.

that have kept it protected successfully? The next part explains the reasons of choosing this park, the significance of looking into the relics park, which is a specific type of open space, and how it requires us to expand our understandings of historic preservation and open space.

2. Case Selection

The case I select is the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park in Beijing, China. Constructed from 1267 to 1276, the Yuan Dynasty City Wall has a history of over 700 years. The northern part of the old city was left outside the wall when the Ming dynasty reconstructed this city wall further to the south. We can still see the earthen remains of the 10-meter-high city wall, which is now called “Tu Cheng (土城)” in Chinese. The Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park is one of the main protected historic relics designated by the Beijing municipal government in 1957. In order to protect this site, Chaoyang District government¹⁵ established a City Wall Afforestation Team¹⁶ in 1974, and the city government designated the part “Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park” in March 1988.



Figure 1 The Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics and Watchtower Relics

¹⁵ Chaoyang District government, in Chinese, 朝阳区政府.

¹⁶ City Wall Afforestation Team, in Chinese, 城墙绿化队.

As introduced before, with a length of more than 5.6 miles (around 9 kilometers) and taking up 67 hectares, the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park is titled as the first and the largest ‘open air museum’ in Beijing. It is located east and west of the Beichen Road¹⁷, to the south of the Olympic Park and the China Ethnic Cultures Park¹⁸. The Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park is divided into seven blocks by six urban roads, forming seven scenic areas which all reflect the vigor of historic Yuan Dynasty and Chinese culture. This relics park was also designated as a national key cultural relics protection unit, a national AAAA level tourist attraction, and a patriotic education base of Chaoyang District as well.

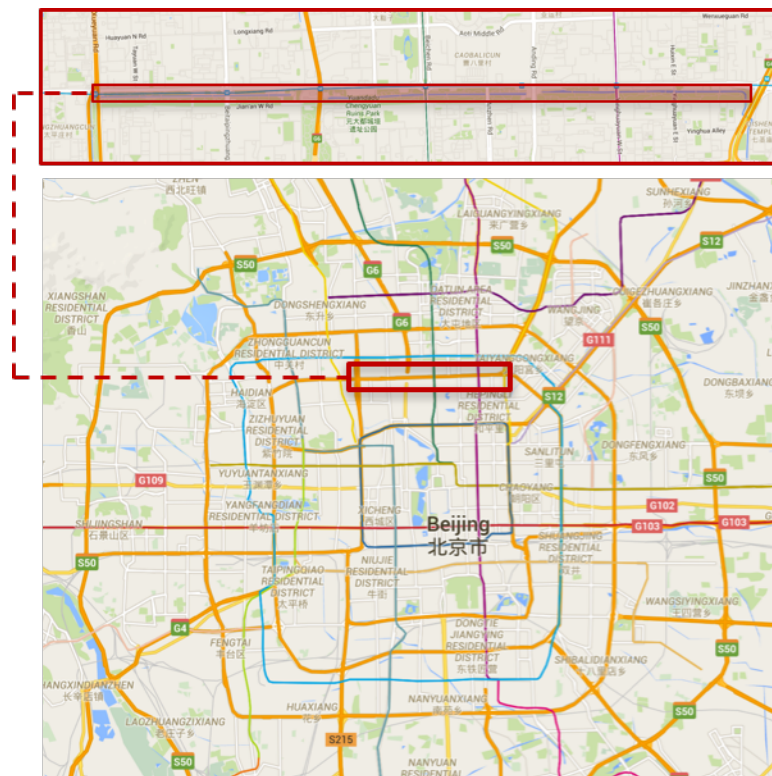


Figure 3 Location of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park

To protect this relics park and create a better living environment, Chaoyang District government renovate the park in 2003. Now the park is creating a vibrant, popular green open space and

¹⁷ Beichen Road, in Chinese, 北辰路.

¹⁸ The China Ethnic Cultures Park, in Chinese, 中华民族园.

waterfront in the busy Beijing, at the same time protecting the historic relics, and providing citizens with a place for recreation as well as cultural identity.

3. Research Question

There has been prior research studying the impacts of public facilities, and research that studies the implications of historic preservation on housing prices. Rarely are there attempts to connect the two topics. This thesis tries to fill that void. The inter-linked research questions are:

- (1) Whether or not the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park is a successful preservation case?**
- (2) If it is, does its success in preservation have to do with its nature as an open space?**

4. Significance

The understandings of the externalities of a relics park would help governmental officials and residents realize the importance of a relics park from both historic value and recreational value. The study of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park, which is a typical case of historic open space, would help us understand the influences of general historic open spaces, which are common in China. So the implications of the renovation of this relics park are profound. The experience we learnt from the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park would be applicable to other historic sites in China, since there are still many relics that are lack of protection or proper maintenance.

5. Research Design and Data Collection

In order to answer the aforementioned two questions, I will first determine the externalities of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park on surrounding residential areas. Then explore the differences between the relics park's influences in comparison to other open spaces and general historic relics.

I chose the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park as my case subject because it is not only open space but also a historic preservation project, which went through a renovation in the early 21st century. Due to the specific nature of this park, I can dig more into its double identities, one as a historic site, the other identity as a park, and study the relationship between the two identities, whether there is a kind of mutual reinforcement between the two. In addition, because of its particularity, comparison between relics parks and general parks, and comparison between relics parks and general relics sites are adopted in the analysis methodology.

The renovation of this relics park reflects the public focus on both historic preservation and open space building. In recent years, urban planners have been paying more attention to historic preservation, and the focus has shifted from increment planning to inventory planning. However, many historic sites still cannot escape the bulldozer and are being demolished to make way for new constructions. In light of this conflict between cultural historic preservation movement and urban construction, preservation has taken on new significance. By comparing to general parks that are not historic designated, comparing to general relics that are not built into open spaces, site visiting and interviews, I draw conclusion on the relationship between historic preservation and surrounding quality of life, and people's viewpoints on the historic open space.

According to the literature review, many studies use quantitative analysis method to measure the value of open space and the influence of historic preservation. In my research, based on their quantitative results, I applied qualitative methods to explore the externalities of historic open space.

I collected data through interviews to nearby residents in winter 2016. Through these in-depth interviews, I extracted relevant information and consolidated them with current research results and theories. I chose qualitative method because, first, property values and economic development are only small portions contributing to people's satisfaction of their living environment; besides, many important determinants of residents' living conditions could not be measured through statistics. In the quantitative analysis, researchers usually more concentrated on the statistical results, but these results could be misleading if one biasedly quantified certain factors during the research process. Interview-oriented qualitative method has an advantage of detecting reasons behind a phenomenon. Every detail collected from the interviews could be investigated deeper and elicit the truth. So, in order to fill the current literature gap, I conducted interviews and collected as many details and evidence as I can.

To support my argument, I mainly use first hand data that has been collected from my site visit and interviews. The interviewees I chose were the nearby residents who were walking around the park or passing by. I randomly picked interviewees and used snowball method to get more interviewees through existing interviewees' referrals.

I spent a week in Beijing observing the site and doing interviews. I conducted semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions to 15 interviewees. The basic information of these interviewees is listed below.

Basic Information					
Interviewee ID	Age	Gender	Occupation	Activities	Residence
A	60+	F	Retired	On her way back home from grocery store.	To the north of the park; Heping Community.
B	80+	M	Retired	Walking the dog and walking.	Anzhenli Community.
C	50+	F	Employed	Doing exercise.	West Anzhenli Community.
D	50+	M	Employed	Doing exercise.	West Anzhenli Community.
E	70+	M	Park Maintainer	Doing cleaning work.	Live far away and take subway here.
F	30+	F	Employed.	Walking.	To the north of the park.
G	60+	F	Retired.	Walking.	To the north of the park.
H	20+	F	Employed	Passing by.	
I	60+	F	Retired	Walking around.	Shenggu Community.
J	40+	F	Employed	Walking the dog and jogging.	Anzhenli Community.
K	20+	M	Student	Passing by.	School.

Table 4 Summary of Basic Information of Interviewees

The ages of these interviewees range from early twenties to over eighty. Except for the passers by, four of them are newly moved (less than 2 years) and the others have been long lived around. From the limited information I got, their living communities locate mostly on the north of the park, including Anzhenli community¹⁹, West Anzhenli community²⁰, Shenggu community²¹, and some other places nearby. One of the limitations is that, this study may lack generalizability. I only conducted 15 interviews, which may not be large enough sample to represent the whole population. However, I tried to cover different groups of interviewees, including people who have jobs and who have retired, people of different ages, and people with different leisure recreational preferences.

In the following part, I analyze the influences of the park from mainly four aspects, including environmental condition, public facilities and services, traffic conditions, and housing perspective, I categorize their answers into these four and dig deep into each of them.

Additionally, I use **comparative** method to test the effects after the renovation of this relics park. I focused on two groups of residents' responses, those who have been living here for a long time and have witnessed the renovation process of the park, and those who have just moved here. These two groups of results would help me to compare the living conditions before and after the renovation of the relics park, as well as the living conditions comparing with other residential areas.

¹⁹ Anzhenli Community, in Chinese, 安贞里小区.

²⁰ West Anzhenli Community, in Chinese, 安贞西里小区.

²¹ Shenggu Community, in Chinese, 胜古小区

6. Interview Questions

In order to get better understanding of the current situation and the services of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park, I designed 3 categories of questions acquiring residents' opinions about the environmental conditions, traffic conditions and the housing around the park. Each major question includes several sub-questions that are more detailed. In the part of environmental conditions, I asked interviewees about the air quality, noise level and the greening in and around the park. In the traffic conditions question, availability of public transit and proximity to transit hub, and parking facilities are asked. The question of parking is optional. Some respondents talked about their monthly rent and some basic housing conditions. Besides, in each question I asked interviewees about their viewpoints on the relationship between these certain elements and the relics park.

In addition to the basic conditions of the relics park, I then asked interviewees their evaluations on the park, such as what do they like most or least about their community or around the park. In the last part of the survey, for those new comers, I asked them to compare their current residence and the previous living location, and for those who have already lived around the subject park for a long time, I asked about the changes that have taken place during recent years. This part is set to see whether the renovation of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park has changed the surrounding environment or whether it has some impacts on the residents' quality of life.

IV. Positive Externalities of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park

From the interview responses as well as my observation, the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park is very well managed, besides it has significant positive externalities to surrounding residents.

1. Good Maintenance of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park

The second aspect I noticed is that the park is well maintained. I saw many tree branches were cut, and the cleaning person told me this is to prevent the dying branches from falling down and hurting passers-by, so as to protect the park visitors. There is no water running in the river, and I was told that this is a yearly river cleanup, and is also a part of the river management in order to keep the river clean in the early spring. In addition, only special parts of the park are gathered with grocery stores, and no informal economy was found, which indicates the park is well regulated and maintained.



Figure 5 Tree branches were cut down.



Figure 6 The river and sidewalk are cleaned up.

Interviewee Mr. B has lived here for decades and has witnessed the whole renovation process.

From his narrative, previously the greening and landscaping were pretty good. There was a Bird Park before. After launching the renovation project of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park, the landscaping grew even better under the better maintenance. The green area has increased, the diversity of plants has increased and the park has been well maintained by local government.

Interviewee E said, before the renovation of the park, the plants were arranged randomly without design. The renovation project marked the beginning of specific designs and formal maintenance.

Interviewee Ms. C and Mr. D indicated the similar. In 2000, there was a river water odor problem caused by the lack of pollution control. At present, the water is well managed. There is an independent office taking charge of managing water quality, including water pollution control and the clean-up of river bed in winters.

2. Positive Externalities to Surrounding Natural Environment

First, during my one-week stay in Beijing between 12.24 and 12.31, I visited the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park, observing its physical conditions and conducting interviews. Because of the oppressive smog weather in Beijing, the park was not as crowded and occupied as expected. However, I found it quite tidy and well maintained, since I saw park staff doing cleaning work at intervals along the belt park. Through few people were walking around the park, these staff still performed their daily work to keep the part clean.

The first question in my interview I asked is about the environmental conditions around the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park. All the interviewees, no matter their occupations or their ages, indicated that the air quality in and around the park is excellent, and they considered highly of the overall natural environment in this park. With varieties of plants decorating the park, the air is purified and the noise level is reduced, especially compared with the foggy air in other parts of Beijing.

Interviewee Ms. A, who is a retired lady, said that she walks across the park almost every day to reach out to the supermarket on the opposite side of this park. Interviewee Mr. B, an old man in his eighties, said that the air quality and the natural environmental conditions are excellent. Even in the cold winter with higher concentration level of PM_{2.5}, he spends one to two hours walking along it with his dog. He believed, the benefits of regular outdoor exercise overweight the detriments of breathing in unhealthy air; moreover, the park provides cleaner air. Interviewee Ms. C and Mr. D, a middle-aged couple, expressed the similar comments that, no matter what kind of weather, outdoor exercise is a necessity or even a must.

Interviewee Ms. F and Ms. G, a mother and her middle-aged daughter, also spoke highly of the natural environmental conditions. They said the air is clean, which is good for both the old and kids to do outdoor activities, and the greenery from spring to fall are enjoyable. The middle-aged lady said she loves taking her baby to this park, enjoying the natural environment as well as meeting with other friends. Interviewee Ms. I, a 50-year-old lady, loves the park very much, agreed with the good air quality in and around the park. She said, the forbidden of automobiles in the park also helps keep clean of the air and the quiet atmosphere. In winters, the air conditions may drop, since trees turn bold and could not shield sand or dust. Interviewee Ms. J, a 40 years old lady who was running along the park when I was conducting the interview, said that although there are many pets in the park, the park is still very clean and free of pets' excrement. Besides, she thoughts it is a lot better for runners to run along the river in the park with plants on both sides of the park, than running along a road bearing the auto noise and automobile exhaust. Interviewee Mr. E, an employee of the park maintenance, spends 7 to 8 hours per day cleaning a certain part of this park. From his introduction, five or six people are responsible for hundreds meters²² length of the cleaning of the park, including collecting trash and swiping the falling leaves in the fall. He also said, the maintenance team also takes care of the dying branches and cuts them down when winter comes. In other parks, due to the strict administration, there would be some venders, like food trucks selling barbeque, but this park is free of these venders, thus keeping a clean and tidy environment.

From these responses, all the interviewees gave positive evaluation to the natural environmental conditions, including the greenery, air conditions, and noise level. From my own experience, since this park also have another name called 'Tu Cheng Park' (土城公园), which means an

²² 1,000 Meter = 0.62 Miles

earthen park, it is very sandy and dusty. Except for this, I also have to admit that the park maintenance does a really good job keeping it clean and tidy.

3. Exercise, Social and Recreational Functions of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park

Third, many interviewees mentioned that this park provides them with an outdoor place for not only doing exercise, but having fun, socializing and communicating. This point is more significant among the retired group, who are available to spend time in the park during their leisure time. And the park does largely enrich their lives.

For example, when I asked about the factors that would affect their choices for living locations, the 80-year-old interviewee Mr. B and the single retired lady Ms. I show great preference for the locations that are adjacent to open spaces and hospitals. Besides, Interviewee Ms. I puts a high value on her social life and her interactive activities, and treats the nearby park as the most important facility.

Interviewee Ms. F and Ms. G indicated that the creation of this park provides the nearby elder residents with a space to get together, facilitating communications among neighbors. Interviewee Ms. F felt a much closer relationship with nearby old friends due to the creation of this park.

To summarize this aspect, most of the interviewees think a nearby park is a value-added item because of its recreational and social functions. Especially elderly people think the proximity to open space is of greater value.

4. Cultural Function and Activities of Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park

Fourth, many of them spoke highly of the cultural activities held in the park. The officials from the Park Service²³ also indicated that these annual cultural activities, have been very popular and attracted both local and foreign tourists, both kids and the seniors. For example, the Cherry-Apple Blossom Festival starts at early April every year and becomes an annual brand activity in the park.

Interviewee Ms. I said the park has become better and better since 2010. More and more social activities were held in the park. People play cards in the day, play musical instruments in the evening, and Cherry-Apple Blossom Festival takes place every year. Park activities almost occupy all her daytime and she attaches great importance to the park.

5. Historic and Educational Meanings of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park

Fifth, the educational meanings have also been realized among some of them, including the elder people, the history lover, the young mom, and so on. Tourists would also be influenced and got better understandings about the history behind.

One of the questions I asked in my interview is their viewpoints towards this park's historic and cultural identity. Interviewee Ms. A considered that, the park's historic value carries more weight to tourists, elder people and those who are with higher level of culture. For herself, she does not know much about the history and does not care much about the historic sites even around her residence.

²³ The Park Service, in Chinese, 元大都城垣遗址公园管理处.

Interviewee Mr. B is just the opposite. He is historical enthusiast and knows much about the park's history and its renovation process. He said, although this park's cultural identity does not bring him practical usages, the protection is still of great importance to carry forward the culture.

Interviewee Mr. K, a college student at his twenties, said he specially paid a visit here out of interest. He would like to travel to historic sites and match historical events with the corresponding venues.

Interviewee Mr. E also said, there would be tour groups going sightseeing here, or tour groups of students coming here to have educational experience. Even if the young could hardly understand the historic background, this educational tour may have subtle influence on them. Interviewee Ms. F, a young mother also said that she would sometimes take her kid to the park and tell the history to her kid. In her opinion, this would lead kids to have a basic understanding of history knowledge. Interviewee Ms. I said she would not take the initiative to learn the history of this park, but she would love to audit when there was a tour guide explaining it.

Interviewee Ms. C and Mr. D have a slightly different idea that, as a relics park, the cultural meanings it carries are not as significant as museums or other heritages. That is to say, the function as a park may weaken its historic identity. However, it does bring convenience to the surrounding residents and provide a platform for cultural activities. The couple also said, they feel proud when the cultural activities, such as the Cherry-Apple Blossom Festival, attract lots of tourists and get accomplishments widely.

Interviewee Ms. H, the young girl and interviewee Ms. J, the middle-aged lady, have little interest in the historic aspects of this park. They know barely anything about the historic backgrounds and know little about the Yuan history.

Except for some people who know nothing and have no interest in the park's history, many of the residents show their respect towards the background history. Most of them appreciate and advocate the historic preservation and the renovation projects of similar historic sites.

6. Transportation and Housing Conditions Around the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park

In addition, the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park also has some minor benefits. For example, since this relics park is an attraction, particular stops are set along it, thus bringing transportation convenience to the surrounding residents.

One of the questions in this interview is about residents' viewpoints towards traffic conditions in the surrounding area. Before my site visit, in my mind the belt park seems like blocking this area and dividing the parcel into northern and southern parts. Actually, there are many passageways for pedestrians to walk across the park, and there are several bridges across this park for automobiles to pass through.



Figure 6 One of the bridges crossing the park.

Interviewee Ms. A, Ms. F, Ms. G, Ms. H's responses all affirm my point that the park does not impede the connectivity of this area, and there are entrances and exits towards many communities. Interviewee Mr. B, Ms. C, Mr. D, Mr. E, Ms. F, and Ms. G also said that, public transportation services here are convenient. There are 6 subway stations along this belt park, namely West Tucheng, Mudan Garden, Jiande Gate, North Tucheng, Anzhen Gate, and South Gate of West Huixin Street. Every two neighboring stops are at a distance of about 1km, which is walkable. Interviewee Ms. C, Mr. D, and Ms. J, who frequently use private cars said that there are parking lots in the surrounding communities around the park and street parking is also available along the surrounding backstreets. In addition, there are also bicycle parking lots near every subway station. From the interviews, residents' demand for transportation facilities is relatively high. Interviewee Ms. A, Ms. C, Mr. D, Ms. H, and Ms. J all have stronger demand for convenient transportation accesses, especially subway stations, and the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park does supply transportation convenience.

Another question I asked is about their housing. Interviewee Ms. A's monthly rent is about 4000 RMB for a 60 square meters²⁴ (around 650 square foot)' apartment. Interviewee Mr. B, Ms. C, and Mr. D have lived here for more than 10 years and own the houses. They said, many of the residents are aged-people since much housing here belonged to the Unit Communities. Interviewee Ms. C and Mr. D also thought that, the residential buildings that are adjacent to this park may have higher housing prices because senior people value the park very much. This consists with Nowak and McPherson's research results mentioned before, that public facilities, like open spaces would bring up housing prices.

From above, the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park has significant positive externalities, including the seven aspects mentioned above. However, according to Listokin (2010) mentioned in the literature review, the increasing real estate caused by public facilities may lead to the gentrification trend.

²⁴ 1 square meter = 10.8 square foot

V. Double Characteristics of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park, and Comparative Analysis among Relics, Parks and the Relics Park

1. Features and Double Characteristics of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park

During my site visit to the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park as well as some other parks in Beijing and other Chinese cities, I found that the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park has several special features that make it different from other sites.

Physically, the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park has a belt shape because of its history. The earthen remains in the park used to be the city wall during the Yuan Dynasty, thus making the park's shape belt-like and also producing the advantage of being a large open space.



Figure 8 The belt-shaped park

The maintenance of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park also makes it stand out from other ordinary parks. During my visit, I found that the staff cleaned up the park regularly and the facilities were well maintained. Almost all interviewees gave positive feedbacks about the present maintenance of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park. One of the interviewees said that, although pets are very common and the flows of people are large during summers, the park is always tidy and clean under the current maintenance. My interview of one of the staff also

reinforced this claim. He said that, the dead branches of the trees were cut down in the winter in order to prevent them from falling down and hurting visitors. Besides, the water does not run during winter. The riverbed is emptied, and this helps with riverbed cleanup.



Figure 9 The cut branches and the emptied river

In addition, people also told me that there are many festivals during spring and summers, such as the Cherry-Apple Blossom Festival, which is one of the most characteristic garden activities in Beijing. In the brochure of the park, this festival is also highly recommended by the government and the park's administrative office.



Figure 10 The Cherry-Apple Blossom Festival

Overall, this relics park has two main special features. The first is its physical shape, and the second is that it is well maintained. These features were supported by the interview responses and have driven the interviewees and nearby residents to use the park frequently. As one the elderly interviewees responded, when he was healthy enough, he could walk the belt park from end-to-end. Compared to smaller parks, this Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park has provided him with a larger and convenient space in which to walk. Besides, many people come to this park to walk because of its beautiful environment, and some people enjoy summer activities very much and make full use of the park as a social place.

The identity of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park as a historical site is an important factor that helps develop these features. Because of its historic identity as the city wall, this park currently has a belt-shaped layout and is easily to be developed into a large park. The well-maintained condition at present may also result from its identity as a relics park and a historic preservation site, thus it receives much support from the government and relevant institutions.

As an urban public park, the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park attracts lots of people. While enjoying the relaxing open space, people could notice the historic ruins and know more about the relevant history by the way. Therefore, its identity as a park helps to advertise and promote its awareness as a historic site.

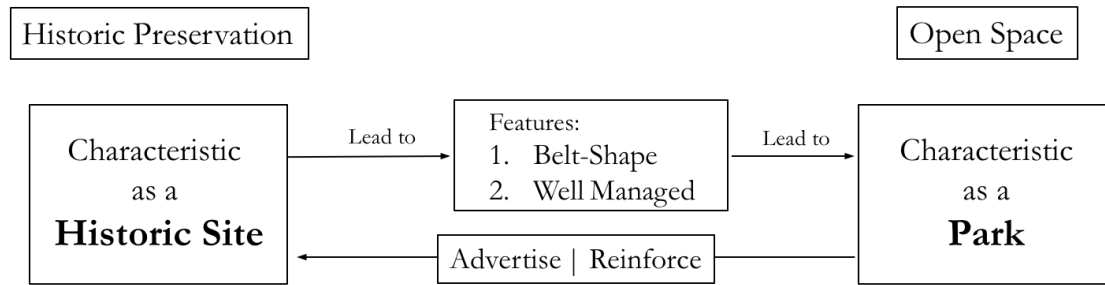


Figure 11 Relationship between the dual characteristics

2. Comparison between Relics Parks and General Relics Sites

According to Guardian's News in 2010, China has already lost more than 30,000 historic sites since 1982, which is, in part, due to the aggressive development. Much famous historic architecture and many historic sites have vanished since 1949, in which, the People's Republic of China was established.

For example, Qingshou Temple Twin Towers, Dianmen, were both destroyed in 1955. Hangzhou Gulou in Zhejiang Province, disappeared in 1960s. Then a fake Gulou was built and replaced the original one. An Qing Mosque in Anhui province, was rebuilt in 1896, then vanished in the 1970s. Liang Sicheng and Lin Huiyin's former residence, I mentioned before, was decided to demolish in 2014.

At the beginning of the establishment of the PRC, during the Cultural Revolution, there was a slogan called breaking the 'four-olds', which means abolishing old customs, old culture, old habits and old thoughts. Under this political background, many historic sites were ruined in order to create new ones. At present, due to the consideration of economic development as well as the political performance pressure of politicians, new urban construction projects always outweigh the consideration of historic preservation, which has led to the current large-scale demolition of historic sites.

There are also some successful cases of historic preservation in China.

The first example is the Ming Dynasty City Wall Ruins Park²⁵, which is one of the top-quality parks in Beijing, China. The Ming Dynasty City Wall is a scenic spot of ancient architectural relic and is located 1.9 miles (around three kilometers) from the center of Beijing's Old City, between the southeast turret and Chongwen Gate in the west. The Ming Dynasty City Wall was first built in 1419, nearly 600 years ago, and it used to be about 25 miles (around 40 kilometers) in length. The remaining relic, which is about 1 mile (around 1.5 kilometers) long, used to be part of the inner city wall of Beijing and is the longest section of the city wall remaining in Beijing today.

The city walls were leveled in the 1950s in order to facilitate transport. Because of artificial damage and the lack of maintenance, and in order to represent the ancient style, Beijing municipal government decided to repair the wall through 'repairing the old as old' and a comprehensive improvement of the surrounding environment. In 2003, stage I (renovating) was finished and stage II (landscaping) began, which added more variety to the plants and perfected the open green space for the public. Now a 10 RMB ticket is required for entry into the inner historic site, and the green open space at the periphery of the park is open to all.

In terms of the cultural identity and functions, people get together in their leisure time and enjoy the open space here. In March or April every year, the park holds a Plum Blossom Festival and welcomes tourists and residents to enjoy the charming event. At present, the Ming Dynasty City Wall Ruins Park is also one of the major places at which big cultural events in Chongwen District are held. Therefore, we can see that the historic site has a brand new look and has

²⁵ The Ming Dynasty City Wall Ruins Park, in Chinese, 明城墙遗址公园.

benefited the surroundings, providing great open space for entertainment. Historic protection has also been realized.



Figure 12 Plum Blossom Festival in the Ming Dynasty City Wall Ruins Park

The second example is Shanghai Xintiandi, which is universally acknowledged as a successful case of adaptive reuse of historic housing for commercial development and has gained commercial success. This adaptation not only transformed the Taipingqiao area (Xintiandi site is in Taipingqiao area) into the most expensive real estate in Shanghai, but also helped with the protection of historic buildings.

The renovation plan aimed at “high-end” commercial with good environment, targeting at middle and upper class people and tourists. The commercial tenants were selected and introduced elaborately. Among the current 98 commercial tenants, 85% come from foreign countries (Feng, 2010). This new commercial complex mainly serves the upper-class consumers. As for the economic effects, the profits generated from this renovation project have greatly exceeded the initial investment and tremendously promoted the market values of the surrounding land.

In 2000, a large urban park and an artificial lake were built in the Taipingqiao area, and simultaneously, a vast open space was created. This open space with enjoyable landscapes attracts not only nearby residents but also businessmen. It has also largely increased the popularity of the Xintiandi project.

Besides, the Xintiandi project is undeniably a good showcase of historic preservation and a new inner city renovation approach, through the adaptive reuse of historic buildings, compared with the traditional ‘museum kind’ of historic preservation (Feng, 2010).

Therefore, this project firstly created a vibrant commercial complex in Shanghai and realized substantial economic value. Second, it has provided a popular open space for entertainment, and social activities. Third, the Xintiandi project is a successful case that has realized the transformation from historic site to a modern commercial area. The historic architectural structures have been protected, and the historic and cultural values have been promoted on a global level.

From the several examples I chose, it seems that people place more value on ‘useful’ buildings or places that are either profitable or have recreational usages, rather than the ‘museum-kind’ of structures that only have memorial usage.

When a historic site turns into a commercial area and brings profits to developers and convenience and entertainment to residents, the non-material historic value becomes touchable and tangible to the public.

Former residences of celebrities are typical examples of ‘museum-kind’ projects. Most of the former residences were protected through building enclosing walls or fences around the single building. This plays a role of commemorative significance, mainly aiming for tourists who come to the city and pay a one-time visit, but not for residents. Compared to the physical benefits to the city and its residents, this cultural importance is only non-material and can hardly be turned into monetary profits or physical benefits for surrounding residents.

The earthen ruins of the ancient city wall have the physical advantage of its belt-shape. It can be developed into a linear park with a length of nearly 6.2 miles (around ten kilometers). Compared to the spot historic site, the belt-shape helps with the establishment of being a large open space, thus benefiting the surroundings and consolidating its non-material value.

3. Comparison between Relics Parks and General Parks

Open space is the platform on which people’s daily lives and communal lives unfold. Parks, as an important form of open space, also play an important role in providing people with better quality of life. The goals of creating parks usually include visual enhancement, environmental enhancement, public welfare and economic development.

First, parks play an important role in improving air quality, which is consistent with interviewees’ responses that the relics park also has great positive impacts on the surrounding environmental qualities. Parks, used to be treated as ‘the lungs of the city’, substitutes for the countryside, where people can be exposed to varieties of plants and fresh air. Parks have become a critical

environmental enhancement approach at present, especially in Beijing, where PM2.5 has posed serious health problems, establishing parks with more green spaces has become a feasible approach to mitigate this problem.

According to Jinghua news, the Tongzhou district in Beijing, proposed 11 large urban parks during the 13th Five-Year Plan in order to enhance urban functions and ecological environment. From the air pollution control aspect, the Tongzhou District Government said that, with the help of these urban parks, the PM2.5 concentration level will decrease by 20% by 2020.

Second, parks have huge impacts on visual enhancement, which is also an important part of the park maintenance and is the basics for holding social and cultural activities. Concerning city landscaping, promoting large-scale, regional, ecological urban parks becomes an important way to enhance visual perception. In Stephen Carr's book *Open space*, during the Renaissance, Italian architects and landscapers created outdoor rooms as grand settings for the life of the times, reaching an apex in Rome in the 16th century. Americans tried to build parks as an approach to urban enhancement and sought to beautify downtown areas in cities. Nowadays, urban parks sometimes serve as landmarks, decorating city landscapes. They also become symbols and tourist attractions. For example, Renmin Park in Shanghai, which is a tourist scenic spot, has great scenery and has always served as a major platform for civic activities.

In addition, parks also take an important role in economic development. According to a report from the American Planning Association, urban parks can be a source of positive economic

benefits. They enhance property values, increase municipal revenues and attract homebuyers and workers, and attract retirees (APA, 2002). Here below are some examples.

Over the 17 years after Central Park was built, there was a \$209 million increase in the value of the property, which is a huge revenue compared to the \$13 million spent on its creation.

In the early 1980s in the city of Chattanooga, Tennessee, the city was facing serious problems of unemployment, crime, air pollution, and a deteriorating quality of life. Then the local government and community groups decided to improve the natural environment and cultural life environment by proposing urban parks in order to provide open space and purify air conditions. As a result, the property value in Chattanooga increased by 127.5 percent compared to the past.

Increased property values can simultaneously bring up municipal revenues because property tax is the most important revenue streams for a city. The increase in housing values in Chattanooga also brought an increase of 99 percent in the city's property tax revenues. Similarly, after the Centennial Olympic Park in Atlanta was built, adjacent housing prices doubled. At the same time, the Centennial Olympic Park has attracted about 1.5 million visitors and held nearly 200 public events, which brought tourism-related benefits to the city and led to economic benefits.

In addition, the APA report also indicates that affluent retirees are attracted and retained by cities with better environments, for example, with better park facilities. Knowledgeable and talented workers are attracted to live and work in these areas as well. People are willing to pay for dedicated open space with expansive views and well-maintained facilities. As a result,

supporting and revitalizing urban parks could largely help cities achieve significant economic development.

Last, parks also have great health value and social value for people. Because parks could not only revitalize neighborhoods, and promote economic development, but also play a major role in fighting obesity and providing safe and healthy places for social recreational activities in order to improve residents' physical and mental health. According to Wolch's research paper *Childhood Obesity and Proximity to Urban Parks and Recreational Resources*, based on an experiment involving 3173 children, for park acres within a 500 meters to children's homes, there are lower possibilities for children to become obese, indicating that children with better access to parks and also recreational resources are less likely to experience significant increases in weight.

The social value of parks is also wide ranging and mainly lies in the provision of opportunities to reach out to others. Parks, as a typical form of open space, relate to people's awareness of the value of places, to the meanings attached to places and to the everyday activities in the locality and relationships with others (Cattell, Vicky, et al, 2008). Parks have served as social forum for interaction, social mixing and social inclusion. They even facilitate the development of community ties. My interview responses also verify this point. One of the interviewees said that, she treated the park as her home during the day. Since retirement, she spends most of her day in the park whenever the weather is agreeable, doing exercise and attending activities such as dancing. This old lady may represent a group of retirees, whose daily lives changed greatly after retirement. Social activities become a focus of life that they can rely on.

Compared to the popularity of historic sites and parks, it seems that people value the latter more than the former. In the year of 2015, Beijing newly built 20 free parks, including 5 urban recreational parks, 5 waterfront forest parks, and 10 countries park. Urban parks have varieties of functions as mentioned before. They bear responsibilities in people's daily lives. People seldom go to a historic site for a second time, but they may go for a walk in a park every day. Similarly, people seldom go to museums every day, but people need exercise every day. This phenomenon also reflects people's strong need for daily activities in the open air.

4. Comparison among Relics, Parks and Relics Parks

The High Line Park, which is built on an abandoned elevated rail track, has become one of the most visitor-oriented parks in the world. It attracts 3 million tourists every year. It runs across more than 20 urban blocks and goes through the Chelsea neighborhood. It is said that the High Line Park has been the catalyst for the regeneration of the Chelsea neighborhood.

At the end of twentieth century, Friends of the High Line was formed in order to advocate for the preservation of High Line. This community-based non-profit group wanted to preserve the "defunct" urban structure and reuse it as an open space while this historic structure was under the threat of demolition. This project got definitive backing from city authorities and gained donations from varieties of sources. This project came up with a great urban open space that colors Manhattan's landscaping without silencing the rumble of traffic below. Originally, this project was started in order to serve the purpose of historic preservation, preserving the outdated, rusted train tracks.

People enjoy walking along the modern but old tracks, lying on the lawn, sunbathing and socializing in the High Line Park, which indicates the popularity of this reuse project. When people think that they are strolling in a park while they are actually walking on an old train track, or walking on a historic site.

Currently, the High Line Park not only preserves the old ruins of the elevated tracks, but also has become a crucial landmark in New York City, benefiting both tourists as well as residents. One thing that we can take away from the construction of the High Line Park is that, we can find a new way to build something new and still retain the old. The old structure could reinforce the new function, and the new function could draw people's attention to the historic site's value.

General parks play a key part in people's recreational, social, physical and even mental lives. They have become indispensable facilities for certain groups of people, such as old and retired people. These utilities grow to be high profile and the values have been widely recognized.

The functions of general relics include cultural and historic values, which are non-material values that are easily ignored in people's daily lives. Under the current backdrop that large-scale urban constructions take place in order to drive GDP and target at monetary benefits, historic sites can hardly realize their non-material values, which are also non-profitable values, thus they are being weeded out in the market.

As a combination of both a historic site and an open space, the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park realizes the transformation from pure cultural value to “useful” or even profitable value, which has been a good idea for the protection of itself and for nearby residents.

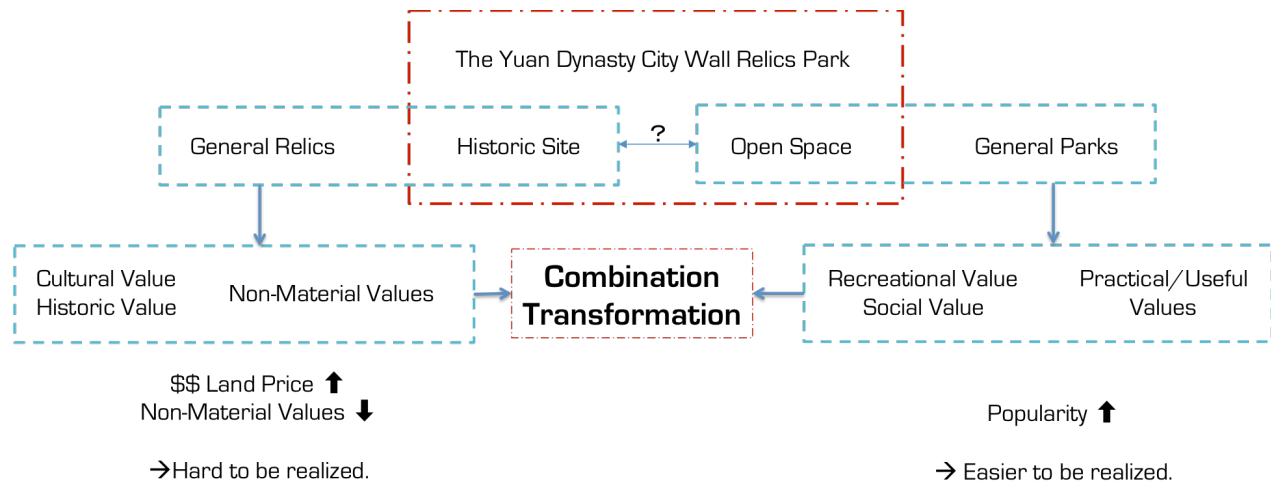


Figure 13 Comparison among Relics, Parks and the Relics Park

VI. Policy Implications

From the discussion about the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park and the example of the High Line Park, we can definitely find that it ends up with a win-win result for the historic preservation through reusing and reshaping the sites into open spaces.

“Utilizing” these historic sites have always been a controversial debate among people and experts. “Utilizing” here may indicate the transformation from the pure cultural and historic values to serviceable and monetary benefits, for example the commercialization process of a historic site. Some people hold the opinion that utilizing historic sites is a kind of betrayal that damages historic relics because some transformations have greatly changed the appearance and even the structure of the community.

However, the utilization of the historic sites could also bring benefits. The creation of relics parks, to some extent, can reduce the conflict between the urban construction and historic preservation.

The Daming Palace National Heritage Park in Xi'an²⁶ is an example. Before the construction of this relics park, the nearby neighborhood was a well-known shanty area, with few infrastructures or public facilities. Then, the construction in the name of the country of this relics park improved this area and triggered the relocation of the residents in this shantytown. The reuse of the historic relics and the construction of the relics park not only realized the historic preservation of these

²⁶ The Daming Palace National Heritage Park in Xi'an, in Chinese, 西安大明宫遗址公园.

old city walls' ruins, but also provided residents with more decent housings in better places, which is also a promotion of urban development and management.

Luoyang ancient city, which was established during the Sui and Tang Dynasty²⁷, is another example. The construction of this park led to the relocation of a tractor factory and a paper mill to out of town, and even changed the road system in nearby neighborhood. Luoyang city took on a brand new outlook due to these great changes.

Based on both the examples above, actually the utilization of historic sites may not definitely confront with urban construction and development, but could in the opposite mitigate the controversy and promote urban development.

From the unsuccessful examples explained earlier, we can also see that some of the heritage sites are not easily renovated into open spaces because of their physical conditions. For example, the footprints of celebrities' former residences or some ancient towers are not large enough to be transformed into an open space which supplies people with large entertainment spaces. Therefore, the difficulties of transforming impede the realization of their historic and cultural values.

One reason leading to the good maintenance of the relics park is the double sponsors from both district government and historic preservation department. This is different from the redevelopment project of Shanghai Xintiandi project, which is driven by developers' monetary benefits. So, the first policy implication is that, the corporation between local government or

²⁷ Luoyang Ancient City, in Chinese, 隋唐洛阳城.

park service office and historic preservation department is a good way promoting park maintenance.

Second, from planning perspective, enough green space should be reserved around historic relics. Thus the relics could have enough space for potential renovation or development. Third, from the current cases, social activities, like the Cherry-Apple Blossom Festival, are very suitable to be held in the relics park. Relevant social and cultural activities could work together with the park, providing recreational to the residents and bringing benefits to the park promotion.

In conclusion, the creation of relics parks, or the renovation of historic site, is a good method of preservation and providing open spaces, and even urban development.

VII. Conclusion

In order to fill the gap that little research focus on the externalities of a historic open space, this research studies what are the influences of a historic open space, take the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park as an example. And how does this historic open space realize its historic value and its social and recreational values. The primary method of this research is through comparison among relics, parks, and the relics park. Besides, first-hand data was collected from my interviewees conducted during my site visit in Beijing.

From both literature and interview responses, the positive externalities of open spaces and historic preservation, especially to a relics park as a combination of the two, are beyond question. Historic heritage places are a kind of museum that can conserve the cultural and historic values, telling the past stories and passing down the cultures in a physical way. Historic preservation will also drive up surrounding residential housing prices, thus promoting economic development of a city.

Open spaces, especially parks, also have undoubted positive externalities, for example, increasing the quality of life through visual enhancement, environmental enhancement, and public welfare. Besides, open spaces will also increase surrounding residential housing prices and promote economic development.

My site visit to the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park and the interview responses both validate the positive externalities of a relics park. This park purifies air, reduces the noise level, and affords enjoyable visual perception through greening and landscaping. This park serves as a

platform, providing open space for residents to take exercise, do outdoor activities, get together and have social interactions. In addition, this park does not break the connectivity in this area; instead, it has several public transportation stops along it. Public facilities, including hospitals, educational facilities and grocery stores are all readily available. This relics park also carries historic meanings, which attracts tourists, gives people educational experience and conserves historic values.

The double identities of the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park as both a historic site and an open space reinforces each other. Because of the historic identity as a city wall, it has a belt-shape and can be developed into a large park. Besides, the well maintained condition currently also results from its identity as a relics park and a historic preservation site, thus getting sufficient support from the local government.

When comparing the relics park and general relics sites, it seems that people place more on useful constructions or places. Many general relics sites, whose footprints are usually just one point, are not as easy as the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park to be developed into a large urban park for people to do outdoor activities. Besides, they are usually ‘museum-kind’ structures and have less recreational or profitable usages, which make them uncompetitive in the ferocious land market competition.

Compared with the single functional historic sites, urban parks have varieties of functions.

According to people’s viewpoints from recent news, the popularity of parks in Beijing has grown

rapidly during these years, especially when the air condition desperately needs improvement. This situation reflects people's growing need for outdoor activities.

From the tragedies of historic buildings' demolitions and in the backdrop of land values dramatically going up, historic heritages need another identity to embody their multi-functions rather than the single functional non-material value. So with the double identities of both a historic preservation site and an urban park, the Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park is a way of transformation from pure non-material value to practical and useful values. These two major functions promote each other and present a cheerful park with both historic meanings and the functions of open space.

The Yuan Dynasty City Wall Relics Park case is not a one-off. As mentioned before, the Ming Dynasty City Wall Ruins Park and Daming Palace National Heritage Park in Xi'an are also similar cases, which develop historic heritages into public parks.

In this context, the renovation of a relics park through the combination approach has been acknowledged gradually and could be generalized further more.

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Annex I: Interview Protocol

To Residents:

Interview Script & Ask For Oral Consent:

Thank you very much for taking the time to talk with me today. I am Shengye Guo, a graduate student majoring in Urban Planning at Columbia University. I am doing a research on the public facilities' externalities and need your participation. The following interview will take about 30~40 minutes and will include mainly 9-10 questions regarding your daily experiences and feelings about the neighborhood you are living in. All your responses are confidential and will be used for only academic purpose.

The purpose of my study is to increase our understanding of the impacts of public facilities, especially this Relics Park, on the surrounding living conditions and residents' life qualities. Your participation in this interview is completely voluntary, and you can share any connections that may occur to you while answering these questions. Do you have any questions or concerns before we begin? Then with your permission we will begin the interview.

Basic Information:

1. Age
2. Gender
3. Occupation
4. Where do you live?
5. Renters or house owners?

6. How long have you been living here?
7. How many family members do you live with?
8. Do you drive?
9. Do you usually take subway/bus?
10. How much time do you spend in home?
11. How much time do you spend outside around the park/neighborhood?

Interview Questions:

1. What do you think of the environmental conditions in your neighborhood/around this park?
 - a. What do you think of the air condition around your neighborhood/around this park?
 - b. Do you think this park has a positive impact on the air condition here?
 - c. What do you think of the greening around your neighborhood/around this park?
 - d. How often do you walk around this neighborhood/around this park? How do you like walking around here?
 - e. What do you think of the noise level around your neighborhood/around this park?
 - f. Do you think there is a relationship between this relics park and these environmental factors?

2. What do you think of the public facilities or public services in your neighborhood/around this park?
 - a. What do you think of the over all services around your neighborhood/around this park?
 - b. What do you think of the high-end commercial services (you would like to show your friends if they come to visit) around your neighborhood/around this park?
 - c. What do you think of the middle-range commercial services around your neighborhood/around this park?
 - d. What do you think of the daily commodity services around your neighborhood/around this park?

- e. What do you think of the public open space/ green space around your neighborhood/around this park?
 - f. Do you think there is a relationship between this relics park and these facilities conditions?
3. What do you think of the traffic conditions in your neighborhood/around this park?
 - a. What do you think of the sidewalks around your neighborhood/around this park?
 - b. What do you think of the bike lanes around your neighborhood/around this park? (For bikers)
 - c. What do you think of the parking around your neighborhood/around this park? (For those who drive)
 - d. What do you think of the driving routes around your neighborhood/around this park? (For those who drive)
 - e. What do you think of the nearby subway or bus stops around your neighborhood/around this park?
 - f. What do you think of the access to taxies around your neighborhood/around this park?
 - g. Do you think there is a relationship between this relics park and these traffic conditions?
 4. What do you think of the housing in your neighborhood/around this park? (For both house owners and renters)
 - a. What do you think of the housing price in your neighborhood/around this park?
 - b. Do you think there is a relationship between this relics park and the housing price?
 5. What other factors you want you say about your community/around this park?
 6. What do you like best about your community/around this park?
 7. What do you like least about your community/around this park?
 8. What factors do you think are important when you choose your living location?
 9. (For new residents especially) What do you think have changed after you moved here? Do you think this relics park has some influence on your living conditions?
 10. (For long-time residents especially) What do you think have changed after this relics park has been built?
 11. Do you have any additional points you would like to make about any of these questions I have asked?

Ending Script:

Thank you again for your participation.

I plan to be here for about two weeks collecting data for the research. If you have any additional information you'd like to share with me please contact me anytime. Besides, it would be great if you can refer to me some neighbors you know. I may also contact you for following up questions through phone calls or dropping by.

My phone number is: +86 15201471867

My e-mail is: sg3225@columbia.edu

Thank you very much for your participation!!

Annex II: Relevant Pictures



Figure 14 Qingshou Temple Twin Tower

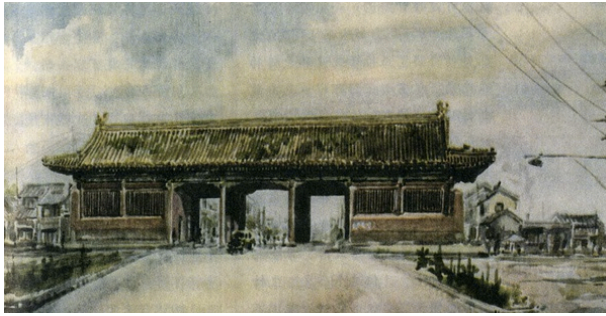


Figure 15 Dianmen

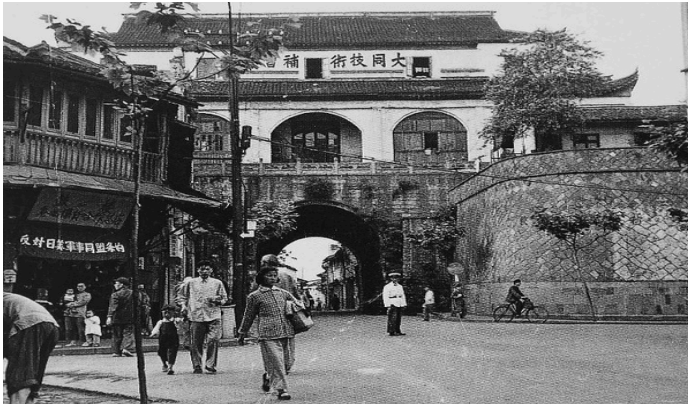


Figure 16 Hangzhou Gulou

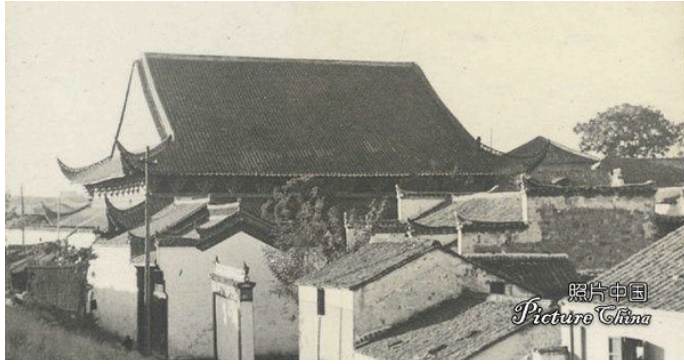


Figure 17 Anqing Mosque



Figure 18 Liang and Lin's Former Residence

Images Source

Figure 1 Source: <http://map.baidu.com/> Adapted by Author

Figure 2 Source: <http://image.baidu.com/>

Figure 3 Source: <http://map.baidu.com/> Adapted by Author

Figure 4 Made by Author

Figure 5 Taken by Author

Figure 6 Taken by Author

Figure 7 Taken by Author

Figure 8 Source: <http://image.baidu.com/>

Figure 9 Taken by Author

Figure 10 Source: <http://image.baidu.com/>

Figure 11 Made by Author

Figure 12 Source: <https://www.zhihu.com/question/24857760>

Figure 13 Source: <https://www.zhihu.com/question/24857760>

Figure 15 Source: <https://www.zhihu.com/question/24857760>

Figure 16 Source: <https://www.zhihu.com/question/24857760>

Figure 17 Source: <http://image.baidu.com/>